

Vocational Rehabilitation Advisory Council  
Smyrna Rest Stop  
5500 DuPont Parkway  
Smyrna, DE 19977  
Meeting Minutes October 8, 2018  
10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Members Present: Suzanne Howell, Chair, Darryl Garner, Member, Blake Roberts, Member, Patricia Burrell, Member, Elisha Jenkins, Director, Division for the Visually Impaired

Division for the Visually Impaired Staff Present: Jill Morrison, Community Relations, Sandra Miller, Deputy Director, Shirley Bryson, District Administrator, Grisel Espinosa, Administrative Specialist, Lisa Edmondson, Administrative Specialist

Others Present: Catrina Gosine, Public, Khalil Abdul-Majid, Public

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m.

Approval of Meeting Minutes: Meeting Minutes for May 14, 2018 and September 10, 2018 were approved.

Old Business: White Cane Safety Day 2018

Technology Fair will be held on October 18, 2018 at DTCC Terry Campus in Dover, DE. 17 vendors will be on-site to demonstrate assistive technology and provide community resource information. Workshops and breakout sessions will be held. Division for the Visually Impaired programs will be on site as well. A robocall will be sent out with Technology Fair information. Attendees can register by telephone.

Vocational Rehabilitation Advisory Council awards will be presented at lunch during the Technology Fair. Darryl Garner will provide the certificates and Division for the Visually Impaired will provide the plaques.

Reappointment of members and chair: Reappointments will be voted on at November meeting. Elections will be held in December following protocols of the state.

The Council is seeking new members: The Council is seeking new members to fill vacancies.

Action item: Chair will forward CSNA report to Darryl Garner and Blake Roberts.

Annual Report: Annual report is due at the end of the calendar year. The 2017 and 2018 annual reports need to be signed and will be forwarded to Council members.

Action item: Elisha Jenkins will forward by-laws to Suzanne Howell and Darryl Garner.

New Business: Council needs to determine who the current members are and ensure they are receiving meeting invites.

Reports: The Council requested that Division for the Visually Impaired provide a Teacher of the Visually Impaired to come in and speak to the council. Division for the Visually Impaired suggests having a teacher call in and provide a report.

Next Meeting Date: The next Vocational Rehabilitation Advisory Council meeting will be moved to November 19, 2018 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Date will be changed on the public calendar.

New DVI Education video: A copy of the new video will be provided to the members of the Council.

Training/Speakers: The Council is seeking training on VRAC purpose/protocols. The Council is also seeking speakers to come to meetings or to participate by teleconference.

Directors Report: The Division underwent a Federal Compliance Audit regarding the Volunteer in Service to America VISTA Grant. The Federal Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) was impressed with the progress made in a short period of time and stated that the Division and our project are a model for other programs to follow. The projects focus is the alleviation of poverty through addressing barriers to employment, education, and training to the blind, deaf and otherwise disabled population.

Business Enterprise Program (BEP): Healthy vending taste testing initiatives took place at BEP vendor/operator assigned locations by AB&C Creative, the marketing company organizing the testing. BEP vendor submitted feedback on the initial taste-testing session. The response to the healthy vending initiative was positive and customers were enthusiastic regarding the healthy vending options.

Independent Living Services: The Division hosted a "What's New in Technology" workshop. The focus was new technology available for demonstration at the Division's training center. A "Fall Prevention" presentation was held at BlindSight Delaware. The presentation focused on three topics: exercise, home modifications and psychological fears regarding falls. Staff anticipate offering a full-scale eight-week "A Matter of Balance" fall prevention program to individuals who are visually impaired in the spring of 2019.

Scheduled upcoming events:

October 4, 2018 - Cokesbury Peer Support Group.

October 18, 2018 – Technology Fair, Delaware Technical Community College, Dover Campus

October 26, 2018 – Diabetes Self-Management Workshop, Dover Library

Technology/Materials Center Volunteer Program: The Delta Gamma sorority has been selected to receive a 2018 Governor's Outstanding Volunteer Award in the field of Education and Literacy. The sorority has helped the Instructional Materials and Resource Center (IMRC) complete various production tasks as well as the collection of customer satisfaction survey data for the Technology, Orientation and Mobility, and Independent Living Services programs. An award ceremony is scheduled to be held in Dover on October 24, 2018 at the Dover Downs Hotel.

Education/Orientation and Mobility: In correspondence to the execution of Delaware's Unified English Braille Implementation Plan, a full-day Unified English Braille (UEB) workshop for the Teachers of the Visually Impaired was conducted on September 10, 2018. The focus of the training was comprehending

the underlying structure of UEB and how to apply it to content materials; specifically in the areas of mathematics and science.

Communications: The Division's Facebook page is building a following. During the first 8 months of 2018 page followers have increased by 25% and direct message service inquiries from members of the public grew by 14% over the previous year. The focus of the page is to advertise workshops, public events, and host a closed group whose members are parents/families of children served by the Division's Education Unit. Although still in development, when fully implemented, parents will have the ability to privately create events and share information, while the teachers coordinating the group will have the ability to post blogs specific to the education of children with blindness. The uptick in followers, increase in service-related inquiries, and innovative use of the site features prove this will continue to develop into a valuable outreach tool.

District Administrators Report: State Goals and Priorities

Increase the quality and quantity of employment outcomes by 15% from the prior fiscal year.

Goal for State Plan is 35 employment outcomes @ 15%

Goal for RSA is 31: One more than the prior year.

Current caseload: 248

Total individuals employed: 35

Individuals ready to work: 35

Median income: \$18.53

Transition aged students 14-21: 76

Transition aged students 14-24: 95

Training and Education: 61

Success Stories: One of our long-term consumers completed her Master's Degree course work in summer 2018 and will be conferring her degree to graduate in the January 2019 graduation ceremony at Wilmington University.

One of our long-term consumers started work at Fernhook as a housekeeper on September 12, 2018.

One of our self-employed consumers has five contract opportunities for his business. His business is doing very well. Manifest Business Consulting provided a write-up on this consumer and his business on why he was so successful with self-employment by utilizing the marketing services offered by Manifest Business Consultants.

One of the Division's long-term consumers will be starting employment at the Boys and Girls Club in a few weeks.

One of the Division's transition students has started working as an adjustment to his school schedule. He is working 16 hours per week.

One of the Division's transition students completed the one-week UD Summer CLSC program in July. He was selected by the Director of the program to speak at a national conference with another student from the 2017 class in Washington DC on November 13, 2018. He will be speaking about his experience in the Summer CLSC program.

Champions Breakfast: We are in the process of working on our annual Champions Breakfast for our business partners. This will be an opportunity to provide ADA training and celebrate our business partners that have supported the Division for the Visually Impaired Vocational Rehabilitation Program this year. The breakfast is scheduled for October 18, 2018 at Delaware Technical Community College, Terry Campus from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Porter State Service Center Collaboration – Governor's Initiative: The Division for the Visually Impaired is involved in the Governor's Initiative to bring services to the core of the City of Wilmington at the Porter State Service Center. The goal is to bring as many services to the Porter State Service Center for the City of Wilmington's residents. The Porter State Service Center is located in one of the most impoverished areas of the city. The Vocational Rehabilitation unit will provide services in this area. A Business Consultant and Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor will be assigned to the Porter State Service Center weekly.

Respectfully Submitted

Lisa Edmondson

Administrative Specialist I

Division for the Visually Impaired